

Golf Industry Show Spray Equipment Highlights

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While most of the country shivered through the coldest week so far in 2011, many Northerners were able to escape to Orlando Florida for the Golf Industry Show (GIS). If you were among those not able to escape to Orlando's warmer weather, here are some highlights from the exhibition relative to spray equipment.

After a few of years without significant changes to their spray equipment, Toro introduced the Multi Pro® 5800. Based on the model '5700' chassis platform, the '5800' has an extensive list of new features and improvements to the



spray system. A larger diaphragm pump adds the necessary flow to keep up with higher application rates as well as improved agitation. Agitation is also improved by a series of side mounted tank agitators that are reported to roll tank mixtures more effectively. Toro boasts faster response time for boom control with new valves supplied by ARAG®. The valves have been proven in the industry and will greatly improve overall reliability. Valve reliability is significant enough that Toro has incorporated them into this year's Workman® sprayer series as well. The Multi Pro® 5800 now includes an on-board CleanLoad™ chemical mixer developed by Hypro®. The CleanLoad™ is mounted on a swing arm assembly which lowers it to an ergonomic working height and lifts it back up out of the way during spray applications. A 30 gallon clean water rinse system is also tucked away on the Multi Pro® 5800. It is automated to run a 10 gallon rinse cycle through two tank rinse nozzles.

There are a number of additional improvements to the Multi Pro® 5800 including a list of factory options. The investment cost of the '5800' is not small,

but with new improvements to performance and productivity for this sprayer, the value is expected to be high.

Smithco introduced their new Spray Star 2000 which is a 200 gallon sprayer model extension to previous Spray Star models. They squeezed in a mid-chassis mounted 31 hp Vanguard engine that powers a hydrostatic drive. What is most impressive is how they wrapped a 200 gallon tank around the chassis to make a very low profile sprayer. The low profile tank gives the operator better visibility of the spray application job and creates a low center of gravity for ground stability. The 70 gpm pump is able to support four high volume tank agitators to keep tank mixtures in suspension while still having plenty of flow for spray application. The Spray Star 2000 is fitted with a Hypro® CleanLoad™ chemical mixer and also three turret nozzle bodies.

The Spray Star 2000 was undoubtedly developed by direct feedback from the market and it offers more features in a small platform than what has been offered before by Smithco.

There were no new equipment changes for John Deere's HD series sprayers which are part of the ProGator® utility vehicle offering. Most of Deere's equipment improvements were introduced in the last two previous years. However, Deere did focus on going further to help applicators choose the best spray tip technology for their sprayers. Deere recognized that the equipment is only as good as the spray tips that are used, so they created an online spray tip selector tool to help match up applications



to the best nozzle technology. Their online tool can be searched under the term 'technozzlegy' and the spray tip selector tool includes the ability to locate inventory within the John Deere dealer network.

The Speed Sprayer™ was exhibited by DMI/IPAC group and got attention if not only for the strangeness of its appearance. The Speed Sprayer™ is an air boom



system that utilizes electrostatic charges to fix small micron droplets to the target turf. They boast higher efficiency in spray application allowing lower application rates and less drift. Electrostatic technology has been used in the Ag industry for a number of years but it has had difficulty being accepted in the market. Advancements in spray quality for traditional spray tips such as pre-orifices and air induction have caught up to this technology with a much lower investment cost.

Walking booms for greens spraying seemed to maintain popularity for those who choose to not drive spray equipment on greens.



The Spray Bug by Hahn Equipment was shown as well as a new product from SDI. Both utilize battery power and small liquid tanks to allow the walking booms to be used without a supply hose from larger nurse sprayers.

While it was good to feel warm sunshine on skin for a few minutes in Orlando, it was also good to see that in the current economic climate, equipment manufacturers have committed to innovating and incorporating new features and improvements that the sprayer market demands. It is also good to note that many of the improvements offered by manufactures can be retro-fitted to existing equipment supplied either through the equipment manufacturers or through specialized turf equipment suppliers.

Overall, the GIS offered many opportunities for advancing productivity and value for turf spraying equipment.